
NEWS From:

Congressman Mike Honda

FIFTEENTH DISTRICT - CALIFORNIA



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Honda Fights to Improve Educational Opportunities, Teacher Development in 2003 Budget
Honda Stresses Need to Make Good on Commitment to "Leave No Child Behind" in US Budget

Washington, DC— Today, former teacher and U.S. Congressman Mike Honda (D-San Jose) was at the center of the debate on how the federal government should spend its money on education when he offered an amendment to the 2003 federal budget resolution. Honda's proposal would increase funding for professional development and teacher quality by \$325 million, Title I funding for disadvantaged students by \$2.15 billion, and After School programs by \$250 million, from levels proposed in the Republican budget.

"On December 13, 2001, this Congress made a commitment to 'leave no child behind' when we passed the landmark bipartisan education bill H.R. 1, but today, it seems that President Bush and House Republicans have ignored that commitment by choosing to underfund H.R. 1 by 90 million dollars," said Honda. **"To make up for this shortfall, I am offering an amendment that would restore funding to After School Programs, Teacher Development, and learning programs designed to help disadvantaged children, so that we fulfill our commitment to truly leave no child behind."**

Last December, in a bipartisan effort, Congress passed H.R. 1, the No Child Left Behind Act Behind Act, which reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) at \$26.3 billion. Fiscal Year 2002 appropriations did not provide the full authorization level, but provided \$22.2 billion for ESEA programs. However, shortly after signing the legislation, President Bush proposed an education budget that cut funding for ESEA programs by \$90 million. The Honda amendment increases funding for H.R. 1 by \$3 billion above the amount in the Republican Budget resolution and the amount in the Bush budget.

The Honda amendment includes an increase of \$325 million over the Republicans' budget for teacher quality programs, bringing the 2003 total funding to \$3.2 billion. States and local education agencies can use the teacher quality performance-based grants to provide professional development for teachers and administrators and also to change teacher certification and licensure requirements, create alternative licensure systems, reform tenure, create merit-based teacher performance systems, and mentor teachers.

The Honda amendment also increases Title I funding by \$2.15 billion over the Republican level of \$11.35 billion for 2003. This resulting Title I funding of \$13.5 billion is still below the 2003 authorized level of \$16 billion. Title I is the Department of Education's largest grant program. It authorizes supplemental programs to enable educationally disadvantaged children, particularly those attending schools in high-poverty areas. It supports more individualized instruction, fundamental changes in the schools to improve teaching and learning, and pre-school education.

The Honda amendment increases funding for 21st Century Community Learning Centers by \$250 million over the Republicans' level of \$1 billion. Republicans froze this program at the 2002 appropriated level. The need for after-school programs is only growing. Over 10 million American children are unsupervised after school. 21st Century Community Learning Centers currently provide 1.3 million students with before- and after-school activities that offer significant extended learning opportunities. After-school programs not only help student achievement, they also cut crime. In a national survey of police chiefs, 69 percent thought the most effective strategy to reduce youth crime was to provide more educational after-school programs. The police ranked this far above prosecuting juveniles as adults and the employment of other law enforcement strategies.

The Honda amendment also provides \$275 million in funding for other ESEA programs. This funding could support education technology, Safe and Drug-Free Schools, Even Start, or any other ESEA program.

“As a former High School teacher and principal, I agree that we must hold our students and teachers to higher national standards,” added Honda. “However, it is essential that we understand that these standards must be a two-way street—if we truly expect our schools to meet the challenges of greater accountability and higher achievement outlined in H.R. 1, then the President and Congress need to ensure that we continue to fund educational initiatives.”